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Press Release

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GOVERNOR DAVIS PROCLAIMS MAY AS MENTAL HEALTH MONTH

SACRAMENTO—Governor Davis has proclaimed May 1999 as Mental Health Month in California.

“In issuing this proclamation, the Governor joins with thousands of consumers, families of consumers, mental health professionals, providers, advocates and local government officials to encourage the public to seek education about mental illness and its causes,” said Stephen W. Mayberg, Ph.D., Director of the Department of Mental Health.

Mental health prevalence rates reflect that within the next year, at least one out of five of California’s citizens will experience personally, a diagnosable mental illness or mental disorder. Mental illness strikes without regard to age, gender, race, social or economic status. “We have to realize that those who are experiencing serious mental illness have done nothing to cause this illness, and are coping with tremendous challenges and deserve understanding and support,” said Mayberg.

Today, we know that prevention and intervention help to reduce the impact of serious mental illness. Early recognition and treatment greatly increases the probability of recovery and the ability to lead a normal life.

“In addition to those individuals who experience biological mental illness, most Californians will be faced with personal difficulties at some time in their lives that may cause mental health symptoms. It could be the loss of a loved one, divorce, job stress, physical illness, caring for an elderly frail parent, or being a victim of a major disaster. Consequently, at some time in our lives, we or a family member have had a need or will need some form of mental health service. It’s in everyone’s best interest to find out all we can about the various aspects of mental illness,” said Mayberg.

Take time this month to find out all you can about mental illness. Contact your local mental health department or the State Department of Mental Health.

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